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TWO

SERMONS

WITH

Five Discourses at the Tables Serving; and the Discourse after the Tables, on *Isaiah* xlii. 6.

Designed to have been preached in the East-Church of *Aberdeen*, at the Celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, on *Sabbath* the 7th, and *Monday* the 8th Day of *November* 1756.

By the late Reverend
Mr. JOHN BISSET,
Eldest Minister of said City.

Found among the Papers of the Deceased; *and published at the earnest Desire of his ordinary* Hearers.

WITH

A PREFACE by his Son, the Reverend Mr. JOHN BISSET, Minister of the Gospel at *Culsamond*.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by WILLIAM GRAY, and sold at his Printing-house, a little without the *West-Port*, 1757.

PREFACE.

THE following ſermon was intended to have been preached by the late Reverend Mr. JOHN BISSET, miniſter of the goſpel at *Aberdeen*, on the 7th of *November*, 1756, the day appointed for the celebration of the Lord's Supper in that city. Death having removed the worthy author, from the communion of the church militant, to the bleſt ſociety and fellowſhip above, where he is now completely happy in the immediate enjoyment of his God and Redeemer, far beyond the reach of perſecution or of ſorrow, all tears being for ever wiped from his eyes; this ſermon is publiſhed (at the earneſt ſollicitation of thoſe who were his daily hearers,) exactly word for word, as it was found among the papers of the deceaſed.

The reader will be pleaſed to obſerve, that the author was deſigned to have diſcuſſed the two firſt heads of the diſcourſe, before he proceeded to the ſolemn action of the day: the third general head and part of the improvement, was to have furniſhed him with five table-ſervices; the remainder of the ſubject he was to have delivered immediately after ſerving the tables, and in a dyet on the *Monday* following: and if providence had ſpared him, 'tis probable, as

the ſermon does not ſeem to contain all he intended on the ſubject, that he would have inſiſted upon it for ſome ſucceeding Sabbaths.

The ſame noble aim the worthy author propoſed to himſelf in all his ſermons, is evidently apparent in this; the leading his hearers out of themſelves to a cordial acceptance of Jeſus the Saviour, in the various characters under which the goſpel reveals him; and the diſplaying before them, in the fulleſt and warmeſt manner, the unſearchable riches of redeeming mercy and love. Chriſt crucified, tho' *to the Jews a ſtumbling block, and to the Greeks, fooliſhneſs*, was the ſum and ſubſtance of his preaching. He knew Jeſus experimentally, as *the power of God, and the wiſdom of God*; and what he had the deepeſt feeling of, himſelf, that he delivered unto others. *From the abundance of his heart, his mouth ſpake*; a circumſtance that cannot miſs to recommend the ſermon now publiſhed, to the approbation and eſteem of all thoſe *who love our Lord Jeſus in ſincerity*.

J. B.

A

SERMON, &c.

ISAIAH xlii. 6.

———*and give thee for a covenant of the people.*

WHatever, promiſes were made to the *Jews* about their deliverance from the *Babyloniſh* captivity, by *Cyrus;* the words now read, are a part of a glorious prophecy concerning the Meſſiah, and of a far greater redemption and deliverance to be wrought by him, in reſpect that there are things in this prophecy, which could not be ſaid of *Cyrus*, who could not be called a *light to lighten the Gentiles, to open the blinded eyes*, nor to *bring the priſoners out of the priſon, and them who ſit in darkneſs, out of the priſon-houſe;* and alſo, in *Mat.* xii. 18. it is ſaid, that theſe words ſpoken by the prophet *Iſaiah*, were fulfilled in Chriſt.

Great and glorious things are ſpoken of Chriſt, both in the old and new teſtament, particularly by the evangelical prophet *Iſaiah*, long before his appearing in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh; who, when he enters upon the ſubject concerning the Meſſiah, he is like one in the utmoſt ſtraits how to ſpeak of him, or talk of him, or how to illuſtrate his

glorious

glorious mediatory character; and therefore he uſeth ſo many lofty figures, ſetting forth the glorious honour of his majeſty, and talking of his power; of which the words I have now pitched upon, are a comprehenſive part.

If the old teſtament ſaints and prophets, who ſaw Chriſt's day afar off, rejoiced at the diſtant ſight and hopeful expectation of the time in which the *day-ſpring from on high ſhould viſit us*, and *life and immortality ſhould be brought to light by the goſpel*, what ſhall we ſay to theſe things, who ſee this *great ſalvation* which God hath prepared before the face of all people, *a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the Iſrael of God?* Now, *bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, for he hath viſited and redeemed his people: and hath raiſed up an horn of ſalvation for us, in the houſe of his ſervant David; as he ſpake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been ſince the world began*, Luke i. 68, 69, 70.

Let us ſtop here a little, and wonder at the mournful difference betwixt theſe holy prophets, *Iſaiah* in particular, and many now who have greater advantages than *Iſaiah* or any of the holy prophets had, of *preaching Chriſt and him crucified;* him who is now ſet forth as crucified before us: and yet, alas! how much is he an unknown Chriſt? how many pretend to preach Chriſt, yet make not him the chief ſubject of their doctrine? Were *Iſaiah* looking up, would he own them as his brethren in the faith of the Meſſiah, who behave as if it were an indecent ſtoop to employ themſelves in putting honour and glory upon his name? How much of Chriſt and the goſpel is in the writings of the prophets; but alas! how little of him in the doctrine of many who now would be eſteemed his new teſtament miniſters? but let God be true, and all men liars: he hath ſaid it, *Pſal.* xlv.

xlv. 17. that he *will cauſe his name to be remembred in all generations, therefore ſhall the people praiſe him for ever and ever.*

It is but little we know or can ſpeak of the glorious honour of Chriſt's majeſty, or talk of his power; nor can we overtake all that the prophet ſpeaks of his glorious mediatory character; nor are we able to reach to the depth of the golden veins of the unſearchable riches of Chriſt, that are wrapped up in theſe few words of my text; that God hath given him *to be a covenant of the people.* But as the work of this communion day is a remembrance of Chriſt's dying love, a renewing our choice and hold of him whom God hath *given to be a covenant of the people,* a remembrance of his holy covenant, a renewing of a broken covenant with God, through him who will be *ever mindful of his covenant:* and in reſpect ſuch work muſt be attended with conviction of ſin, and our breach of covenant, and a deep ſenſe of unworthineſs to enter into covenant with God, and of inability of abiding in covenant; and that therefore our hearts do fail us, when we think on theſe things: here our encouragement, here a broad foundation for a large ſuperſtructure of grace, Chriſt who is our hope, is *given to us for a covenant;* God hath *made a covenant with his choſen,* therefore his *mercy ſhall be built up for ever,* and *his faithfulneſs to all generations.*

In explaining theſe words, I ſhall

Firſt, Endeavour to ſpeak to the import of Chriſt's being *given for a covenant.*

Secondly, In what reſpects Jeſus the Meſſiah, is, and may be called, A covenant, or, The covenant.

Thirdly, Shew what is imported in Chriſt's being *given for a covenant of the people.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Make application of the whole.

The FIRST GENERAL HEAD is, To endeavour to speak to the import of Christ's being *given for a covenant*. *I will give thee to be a covenant of the people:* these words are brought in as spoken to Christ himself, in whom is *all our comfort and hope*, and to whom should be *all our desire*. And they import,

1. That the original and foundation of God's covenant-dealings with us, is an eternal compact between Jehovah and Christ, and had not its beginning and use from our fore-thoughts of that business, when we began to entertain the news of a Saviour, and of redemption by him: it lived not in our breasts, but was under deliberation between the Father and the Son, long before ever it entered into your hearts; yea, it was there transacted; the heirs of salvation were fore-ordained unto their lot and inheritance, when the captain of salvation was destinate unto his work. O how comfortable and how strengthening is this to poor sinners, who now believe that eternal covenant-love, covenant-dealings, covenant-relations and engagements, begin at the head Christ, fall first on him, and then descend to the elect-seed! *Eph.* i. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.*

2. It importeth, that the love of the Father and of Christ, which now hath appeared and broken forth in the designs of his grace, in bringing us into a new covenant state, hath been in action for us and about us, from eternity, before we had a being, *Jer.* xxxi. 3. *With everlasting love have I loved thee, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn*

drawn thee. Prov. viii. 23, 31. Chriſt our *covenant* was ſet up *from everlaſting, rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth.* How ſhould this comfort and encourage faith, and aſſure our hearts, that the love of God and of Chriſt deſigned a bleſſed covenant-ſtate for us, when we were not yet created; and provided a phyſician before we fell ſick; that he had a redeemer in readineſs before the fall of man, which he foreſaw; who provided a ſurety before he was needed, to be in readineſs to ſtrike hands for our debt! That Chriſt, whoſe death we this day remember, ſpake kindly for us, when we were not preſent; that, without being deſired by us, he took our caſe in hand; that he undertook for us, when we had neither being, nor knowledge of his undertaking!

3. It imports, that our redemption and ſalvation doth not depend upon our will, but upon God's gracious will. *Now this is the Father's will, that of all that he hath given Chriſt,* all for whom Chriſt is given, *he ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt-day,* John vi. 30. There is now no more of our will in all the buſineſs, but ſo much as is captivated, bowed, and carried after God's will, *who worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleaſure,* Phil. ii. 13. And how ſweet and comfortable is it, that ſalvation by the new covenant is taken off from the mutable will of man, and laid upon the immutability of God's counſel, *Heb.* vi. 17. and upon his unchangeable will!

4. God's giving of Chriſt *to be a covenant,* importeth, that the fountain and well-ſpring of life and ſalvation, and of all the influences that muſt needs lift us towards it, lie out of ourſelves, and are placed in Chriſt, *Pſal.* lxxxvii. 7. *All our ſprings are in him.* He is the well-head of our life; the well-head of life in *Adam,* was in him-

 ſelf,

self, but that went dry; he had no other fountain whence to draw, till Christ was given, and that *fountain of living waters was opened.* O how sweet is that to the believer, that his salvation is founded on Christ, from whom he may take in fresh supplies, when his well runs dry! There is *a well of living waters springing up to eternal life*, John iv. 13. Forsake your own dry and empty wells; come here and draw, and you shall be satisfied, because Christ who is *given to be a covenant for you, lives, ye shall live also*, John xiv. 19.

5. The Father's giving Christ *to be a covenant*, imports, that all your promises of heaven and salvation, and of all your spiritual concernments, are in a surer hand than your own, even in Christ's keeping, to whom the promises are made. He is *the heir of all things*, Heb. i. 2. to whom the first title and right to the promises which are our charters, doth belong. They were first his, before they were ours; yea, and he was the first possessor too. Upon Christ did all the acts of Christ's covenant-love first fall, *Acts* xiii. 34. *I give you the sure mercies of David.* Most of the promises were made formally to Christ, even these which directly relate to our calling, justification and salvation, *Isaiah* liii. 10. 11. *And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.* And these that were not made formally to him, such as, a new heart, a new spirit, remission of sins, yet were made to him eminently; they were laid down in him, and consigned in his hand; for Christ is not only the original and fountain-cause of all the promises, who merited by his blood, remission, righteousness and life, which the Lord

makes

makes out by free promise; but he is also the first subject of the promises, Christ receiveth all the covenant-promises, which are our rights and charters, and he keepeth and manageth them for our use, as may most tend for our good. Christ, who is *given to be the covenant*, is that excellent ark who keepeth the table of the covenant. O how sweet and satisfying is it, that our rights of heaven are in such a charter-chest, and in the hands of such a keeper, even in Christ's custody, who will give a good account to his Father, of all committed to him!

6. God's giving Christ to be *a covenant of the people*, importeth, that Christ and the poor sinner are in one writ. There are both their interests and their names; so that now we stand not alone in covenant dealings with God; but Christ stands a principal party covenanting for us, and receiving the promises. His name was put in our bond; for he wrote himself the sinner legally, and in the sinner's Place, under the law, accursed; and our name is put in the writ of justification given to him, and faith writes the believer righteous and blessed, 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* There is a community of writs between Christ and believers: one writ and promise makes God the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the God and Father of the believer, *Heb.* i. 5. *I will be to him, a father, and he shall be to me, a son.* Psalm lxxxix. 29. *His seed will I make to endure for ever.* One writ makes Christ the first heir and son of the promise, and the believer, a younger brother coming in under Christ the first heir, *Psal.* lxxxix. 27. *Also I will make him my first-born.* Col. iii. 26. *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ.* One writ and acquittance discharges both

Christ and the believer from the curse and condemnation of the law, *Rom.* viii. 34. *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.* O how comfortable and strengthning is this, in this day of remembering of Christ's dying love, that Christ and believers are in one writ; that our covenant-interests in, and relations to God, and all his and our concernments, are thus bound up in one writ! If his title to God, to heaven, to promises, be good and valid, ours is so too: if he acquit and defend his own charters, he doth the same for ours. Blessed are they who are united to him, in the new covenant relation.

7. Christ's being given to be a *covenant of the people*, imports, that he is entrusted with being the grand instrument and actor in all things that appertain to his people's redemption and salvation, *Heb.* v. 9. *And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him.* O how warm, how comfortable is it! what a support to faith, that Christ is given to work all manner of salvation for his people, and to be the grand instrument and chief actor thereof; that now we may look to him whom the Father hath given to be a *covenant of the people*, as *the author and finisher of faith*, Heb. xii. 2.

8. The Father's giving Christ to be *a covenant of the people*, imports, his having laid on him all the hard conditions, all that the law requires of man, condition-ways, *Gal.* iv. 4. *He was made under the law.* O how sweet and comfortable is it to the poor creature, who finds himself unable for all covenant-conditions, to find that Christ did take upon him all conditions which the law requires; so that now, tho' the believer be under the commands of the law, he is not under the conditions thereof, for now is it not to him a covenant

venant. Christ also did bear the curse of the law; but now that which the believers suffer, even of the things that were written in the book of the law, are now written in the book of covenant mercies. Christ did take upon him all the conditions that are works; and nothing remains to the believer condition-ways, but that which is grace. It is true, the believer yet worketh, *Eph.* ii. 10. *They are created in Christ Jesus unto good works;* but all working, condition-ways, was on Christ, given to be *a covenant of the people.* The principal, and most significant condition of redemption, salvation, and all covenant-blessings and priviledges promised to us, is Christ's doing his part of the covenant, his laying down his life; not only as the condition of the reward, to be given to Christ personally, but even all the promises that were made to him concerning his redeemed seed, *Isaiah* liii. 10. 11. *He shall see his seed; he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.* Christ is under a covenant to work in his people, all that God requireth of them. O how comfortable is it, that Christ is under a covenant to his elect people, not for any thing they can do for themselves, but for the work that he hath wrought, and the conditons he hath fulfilled in his own person, and is obliged to fulfil and work in them! The promises then are fulfilled to us, not because we fulfil the condition, but for Christ, in whom they are made to us, and who did perform all the conditions that the law and justice of God did require.

9. God's giving Christ to be a *covenant of the people,* imports, that Jehovah is engaged by covenant with Christ for our believing, and Christ hath given bond for this also. *He shall see his seed,*

Isaiah

Isaiah liii. 10. How comfortable is this to the weak believer; how strengthening to faith, that Jehovah gave bond from eternity to Christ, and stands engaged to him for bowing of our rebellious wills; for such a frame of heart to us, as our salvation requires! and that Christ stands engaged to be to his own, a merciful and faithful high priest; and that by the bonds he came under, it behoved him to be so, *Heb.* ii. 17. O consider that he can no more be unconcerned with our concernments, or be untouched with a feeling of our infirmities, than he can cease to be a merciful and faithful high priest, and fail in the bonds he hath given to his Father.

10 God's giving Christ *to be a covenant of the people*, imports, the sure and confirmed state in which every believer in Christ is. God's covenanted people are not now in a tottering, slippery, mutable condition, as were the angels that fell, or *Adam* in the state of integrity; but now Christ being given *for a covenant of the people*, their help is laid *on him who is mighty*, Psalm. lxxxix. 19. on him *who giveth power to them that have no might, and to them that are faint, he encreaseth strength*, Isaiah xl. 28. 29. How may this comfort their hearts who believe in Christ: what a support is here to their faith, that tho' they be not yet out of danger, yet they are in a secured confirmed state; that they can no more fall away from a state of grace and faith, than Jehovah can break to Christ, or Christ break to his Father. *Psalm* lxxxix. 35. 36. *Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto* Jacob——*his seed shall endure for ever.*

11. God's giving Christ to *be a covenant of the people*, imports, that through the faith of Christ's justice, the terrible attribute of God is no more dreadful to them who believe in Christ, 1 *John* i.

9.

9. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Christ hath satisfied justice, hath paid the believers debt to the last farthing. How sweet and comfortable must this be to the believer, that through Christ whom God hath given to be *a covenant of the people*, not only grace and favour is for him, but justice also, that they may now plead for pardon and remission at the bar of justice itself.

The more particular use of this.

1. Hath God given Christ to be *a covenant of the people?* then learn to frame an answer to all temptations arising from our own frailty, mutability, and inconstancy, and sad mixture of unbelief with faith, and of corruption with grace. You think *Adam* and the angels fell who had no sin in them; how can we stand? Christ being given as *a covenant*, answers these and the like assaults of the weak believer's faith; for 1*st*, Thou standest by faith which excludeth boasting, and if thou be not *high minded but fear*, thou shalt stand by faith, *Rom.* xi. 20. *But they who stood by the law of works feared not, but were lifted up and fell.* 2*dly*, That little and weak faith that is in thee, is of another kind than that in innocent *Adam* or the angels, which was not in Christ the covenant: so thy faith is given thee for another end, even that by going out of thyself, thou mayst stand by faith; and cometh from another spring, which makes it indefectable, *Luke* xxii. 32. *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* 1 John iii. 9. *It is the seed of God that remaineth in thee.* 3*dly*, Although *Adam* and the angels that fell, had grace without mixture of corruption, yet had they no promise nor assurance of the Spirit, and actual influences which the weakest believers have, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 27. *And I will put my spirit within you,*

and

and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. 4*thly*, Neither had these grace in Christ the storehouse, given unto them; all their stock was in their own hand; the fountain of life was in themselves, but the believer's, in Christ, *John* i. 16. *from whose fulness they receive, and grace for grace.* 5*thly*, Christ was never a covenant nor undertaker for angels or innocent *Adam*, as he is for them whom the Father, in the eternal counsel of peace hath given him.

2. From this doctrine, and especially on the day of this holy memorial, learn to study and admire these eternal depths of love and wisdom that shine forth in God's covenant-transactions with Christ, that you *may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth and the length, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge*, Eph. iii. 18. 19. This glorious mystery the angels desire to search into, though not so much concerned in it, as we are; and shall not we study, remember, and admire it? As

1*st*, The wisdom and knowledge that found out and devised this way, which was beyond the possible reach of men and angels: that lost man, who was in as hopeless a condition as the fallen angels, should have the hope of recovery by Christ, given them *as a covenant.*

2*dly*, The everlasting out goings of the same eternal love, which came forth in covenant-transactions between the Father and the Son, when these objects of his love and eternal delight, were not as yet revealed, *Prov.* viii. 23.——31. What a wonder is this, that the delights of God should be taken up about such objects!

3*dly*, The sovereign graciousness of free preventing grace, that Christ should be given, and should come as a covenant and undertaker for the people,

people, and this not sought nor sent for, nor so much as desired by us. *Isaiah* lxv. 6. *I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.*

4*thly*, The seasonableness of the notice of his being given as a *covenant of the people*. The Lord provided a physician before we were sick: gave him to us in due time, *Rom.* v. 6. *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.* When fallen man was sick unto death, when justice with a fiery sword kept him out from happiness; when he was running away and hidding himself at the voice of God, *Gen.* iii. 10. When the one was desperate, and the remedy to our knowledge, impossible; then God gave him *to be a covenant* for us.

5*thly*, We are here to study and admire the double terms by which we hold pardon and life by Christ, given *to be a covenant of the people*: by free grace, and by justice both. Through Christ, given *to be a covenant*, provision is made, that free grace should acquit wretched sinners; and that justice also should discharge them for a full price laid down. Christ hath said to Jehovah, as *Paul* did to *Philemon*, concerning *Onesimus*, Phil. i. 19. *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee any thing, put that to my account; I will repay it.* And this answers all that law and justice, or the accuser can say; and therefore, every one who by faith lays hold on Christ, the *covenant of the people*, may say with *Paul*, Rom. viii. 33. 34. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?*

3. Learn hence, how needful the knowledge and persuasion of Christ's undertaking to be given as *a covenant* for us, is: not any thing more ne-

ceſſary than this; not any thing more needful to be believed. 1*ly*, For our right underſtanding of our debt to Chriſt, who did ſo freely, being under no neceſſity, and not deſired by us, undertake for us, and did put his ſoul in our ſoul's ſtead. A worthy ſtudy indeed, and well becoming a believer, to know what we owe to Jeſus, given *to be a covenant*, who ſpake for us, behind our back, when we were abſent, and who laid down his bond for ours. 2*dly*. For eſtabliſhing our hearts in the faith of our ſalvation and complete redemption. Is there any thing can ſo eſtabliſh the heart of a believer, as to know that Chriſt is an undertaker for him? He who can believe that Chriſt is given to be *a covenant* for him, cannot doubt but he will fulfil his undertaking, and that he ſhall be ſaved by him, *Rom.* v. 10. *Being reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, we ſhall be ſaved by his life*, 3*dly*, For ſilencing all the actings of unbelief in us, and the perverſe opinions of our hearts concerning God's covenant good-will towards us. If the Father hath given Chriſt, and he hath undertaken to be *a covenant* for us; what ground for doubting of his willingneſs to take us into covenant with himſelf, or of his readineſs to beſtow upon us, all theſe bleſſings which Chriſt the great undertaker hath purchaſed by his death? *Rom.* viii. 32. *God, who ſpared not his own Son, but gave him up to the death for us all; how ſhall he not, with him, freely give us all things?*

5. Is Chriſt given to be a *covenant of the people?* here comfort to all who are convinced of enmity betwixt God and them. Lo, here glad tidings! Chriſt is the covenant, given for this end, to make up the breach which ſin hath made between God and them. He is already, long ago, deſigned and appointed for this end; for him hath God given to be a *covenant of the people*. He hath already

already done the work; he hath purchased and proclaimed peace to rebels, who will come and accept of it, *Eph.* ii. 16. 17. *That he might reconcile us to God by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. And came and preached peace to them that were afar off, and to them that were nigh.* He is now ready to receive within the bond of his covenant, all who will come and declare their acceptance of his offer. Why then do you hesitate? why stand you far off? what aileth you? is there not here encouragement and support for faith? is there not here encouragement against felt enmity, and wrath, feared?

5. Christ being *given for a covenant of the people*, should be improven by us, to establish our hearts in the faith of the weight, and the prevalency of Christ's undertaking for us. He is no usurper. He is a called, and a chosen person, and therefore all that he doth in the work of our redemption, being according to the commandment he received of his Father, must prevail with him who gave him *for a covenant of the People*, from whom he received his commission.

6. Is Christ given to be *a covenant of the people?* Then learn the necessity and obligation we are under of receiving God's gift. They who slight the gospel offer of Christ, besides, the neglect of the great salvation, brought to them, in that offer do slight a chosen officer, and a person called and put into so high authority by God, to travel with you in the business of your salvation: *How shall they escape who neglect so great a salvation?* Heb. ii. 3.

7. To conclude this head, here again comfort to them who believe, from Christ's being given *to be a covenant of the people*, he hath an eternal call from the Father to this great undertaking. He deeds not much intreaty to be about the office

whereunto he is called of God. If at any time you think he will refuſe your intreaties, which he will not, yet he cannot ſhake off his Father's calling him to this great undertaking. O what encouragement to come to him, to covenant with God through him, who can no more decline any thing that may be for your good, than he can be unanſwerable to his Father's calling and appointment, or unfaithful in his office, or in performing of the great truſt given to him, which is impoſſible!

The SECOND GENERAL HEAD is, To ſhow in what reſpects the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is, and may be called, *a covenant*, or *the covenant*.

The Lord Jeſus Chriſt is called *a covenant of the people*; but how can this be, ſince covenants are between two different parties, and Chriſt our mediator is but one party: how can he be called *a covenant*.

Anſwer 1. In reſpect that the abridging and ſumming up of the whole covenant is in Chriſt, in whoſe wonderful mediatory perſon, the two parties at enmity were united. *I will give the for a covenant of the people*; that is, "I will make a "gift of thee to be to my people, the ſummary "and compend of all the bleſſed tranſaction, and "covenant which I purpoſe with them."

2. It imports the commitment of the whole buſineſs which God propoſed to do with his people in the way of a covenant, unto Chriſt, to be managed by him; or it imports, that Chriſt is all the covenant. All the covenant is compriſed in Chriſt; or God, by giving Chriſt, doth give the *covenant of the people* with him. But more particularly; Chriſt is the covenant, and what follows, gives us comfortable views of Chriſt, with whom, in the remem-

remembrance of his dying love, we are to seal a covenant: and this day, in this solemn action before us, we profess to be so employed. I say, Christ is the covenant,

1*st*, Originally and fundamentally. He is the original and root upon which it is grounded. The covenant of grace took its rise and being from Christ, *Rev.* xxi. 16. *He testifieth to the churches, that he is the root and offspring of David.* He is the ancient foundation of that which was revealed of the covenant from the beginning of the world; therefore God revealing this covenant in paradise, presently after the fall, bottomed it upon Christ *the seed of the woman*, Gen. iii. 15. and revealed it to *Abraham*, he grounded it upon Christ, *Abraham*'s seed, *in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed*, Gen xii. 3. xvii, 1. 2. Christ is the eternal foundation of the Covenant, upon whom it was bottomed in the eternal decrees of God: hence our calling and salvation are said to be promised us, and given us in him, *before the world began*, Tit. i. 2. *In hopes of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, hath promised, before the world began.* 2 Tim. i. 2. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began.*

2*dly*, Christ is the covenant primarily; and by propriety, as fire is hot for itself, and all things hot for it, and by participation, because with Christ was the covenant made, as the chief party, and with believers, in subordination to him: with him it was made for himself; with us, it was only made for him; therefore it is his covenant by propriety, and ours by participation, and therefore all the promises are fulfilled first in him, therefore it is his covenant, and all the acts of God's

God's love terminate first in him, and then descend down to us. *Isaiah* lix. 21. *This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, henceforth and for ever.*

3*dly*, Christ is the covenant, eminently, because he is the chief blessing of the covenant, there not being such another promise and gift in all the bundle of promises, contained in the covenant; therefore he is spoken of by way of eminency, as being the transcendant gift of God, and matchless effect of God's love, besides which there is not another the like, *John* iii. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whoso believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* He is the pearl of great price, the most precious stone in all the jewel; all other things in the covenant, righteousness, life, pardon, peace, &c. are but the garnish of this jewel, *Song* v. 10. *He is the chief among ten thousand.* He is the most sweet and precious being, in all the cluster of promises, which grow together in the covenant, *Song* i. 14. *My beloved is unto me, as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi. He is the fairest and brightest star.* Rev. xxii. 16. *The bright and morning star.* He is the fairest stone in all the building, none like unto him; he is the chosen of God, and precious; he is the fairest tree in all the garden of God, like the tree of life in the midst of *Eden*, *Song* ii. 3. *As the apple tree among the trees of the wood; so is my beloved among the sons.*

4*th*, Christ is the covenant, virtually or equivalently; he is the just value of all the bargain; he is of as much worth, as all that is promised and contracted to believers, in the covenant of grace; so that if the value of it were asked, how much it

is

is worth, it could not be anſwered otherwiſe than ſo: it is of as much value as Chriſt is: and when the promiſes are fulfiled to the utmoſt, they amount not beyond the giving of Chriſt to believers, *John* i. 12. *To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God; even to them that believe on his name.* Col. iii. 11. *Chriſt is all and in all.*

5*thly*, Chriſt is the very ſample and firſt pattern of the covenant, and of the deſign of grace carried on thereby; this we have in the union of the two natures in Chriſt, the mediator's perſon. For, conſider, I pray, the great deſign of favour, carried on by the covenant of grace, is an union of man with God, a reſtoring of man, to a ſtate of friendſhip with God, and in Chriſt, *the covenant*; his perſon was the ſampler, and original pattern of all the buſineſs; to wit, *Firſt*, of God's infinite condeſcenſion, and ſtooping ſo far, towards a nearneſs and union with man, *Philip.* ii. 6. 7. *Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men. Secondly*, of the unſpeakable exaltation of our nature, towards an union with God, *Heb.* ii. 16. *For verily, he took not on him the nature of angels, but the ſeed of Abraham; for which cauſe he is not aſhamed to call us his brethren. Thirdly*, of the union and conjunction, which is the reſult of God's condeſcenſion, and is our exaltation. So then, Chriſt is the covenant, in this reſpect, as in his mediatory perſon, we have the firſt ſampler of the union and agreement of the parties covenanting

6*thly*, Chriſt is the covenant, comprehenſively, or ſummarily, and, as hath been noticed, is the very compend and abridgment of the covenant. In his perſon, there is a ſum of the whole. Conſider this, how

how the parties, articles, mutual ſtipulations, promiſes, properties, and bleſſings of the covenant, are all ſome way abridged in Chriſt, and ſummed up in his mediatory perſon. And

1. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is all the parties of the covenant of grace, or rather both the parties are comprehended in the mediator's perſon. He is both the parties, in the following reſpects; 1. Becauſe of the union of the divine and human nature, in his bleſſed perſon. He is God-man, and *God manifeſt in the fleſh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *He came in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh*, Rom. viii. 3. He took upon him the nature of fallen man, yet ſanctified by the union with the divine nature. 2. Becauſe that perſon who is the covenant, is upon both ſides of it: as being one with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, he is on God's ſide of the covenant; and as being one with us, he is on our ſide of the covenant. He is not only on both ſides of the covenant, but he contracts for both parties, carrying the relation of a party, both upward to God, and downward to us. He waiteth and covenanteth for God with us; and he treateth and covenanteth for us with God, which, upon the matter, is to carry both parties in his perſon.

2. The ſum of all the articles of the covenant, is in Chriſt. Conſider then what is the ſum of the articles; even this, *I will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people*: now this is in Chriſt Jeſus, 1. In regard of the conjunction of relations in him towards God, owning his people, and his people owning him; he being the only perſon in heaven or earth who is able to bear the relation of God towards the people, or of the people towards God; for he is *Immanuel, God with us*, Matth. i. 23. Here is God and the people united, and owning one another, and in ſome things he doth repreſent God to us as ours, and ſometimes he doth repreſent

ſent the people to God, as his. 2. In regard of cauſality; for Chriſt is not the cauſe of God's love to the elect, or of God's electing love, but the effect thereof, as *John* iii. 16. yet he is the cauſe of the effects and acts whereby it runneth forth to us. Chriſt is the bottom of the relation that is betwixt God and his people; for by his taking a new covenant-right unto God as his God and Father by covenant, he did lay the foundation of his being our God by covenant, and of our being the people of God by covenant, which had never been, were it not for Chriſt's new covenant-right. 3. In regard of conveyance, or of the way and manner in which we have acceſs to this privilege and covenant-ſtate, to have God to be our God. God is our God in Chriſt; and we are his people in and through Chriſt: and without an exiſtence in Chriſt, and union to him, God is not ours, nor are we his, *Eph.* i. 12. For covenant-relations, as well as covenant-bleſſings come to us through Chriſt. We come to God in Chriſt, and God cometh to us, and becometh ours in Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* v. 19. *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world to himſelf.* Heb. vii. 25. *He is able to ſave to the uttermoſt, all them that come to God by him.*

3. The ſum of the mutual ſtipulation in the covenant, is in Chriſt, who may be well called the whole ſtipulation, 1. Becauſe it is he who obtaineth the conſent of both parties, and receiveth their *Amen* to that bleſſed tranſaction of friendſhip and union; the conſent of the one from everlaſting, and that of the other when we believe. 2. Becauſe the covenant was given to him to be fulfilled on both ſides by him. It was fulfilled on God's ſide, for he was the perſon ſent to perform all that God had promiſed to his people: by him it was fulfilled on our part, for he was the perſon on whom our help was laid. 3. Becauſe upon the

matter, Chriſt is the very thing which is ſtipulated upon both ſides. Conſider that God ſtipulates to give us Chriſt, and that is the ſum for what he ſtipulates to give himſelf to us: again we reſtipulate to give Chriſt to God for all that the covenant requires of us. 1 *Cor.* i. 30. *Phil.* iii. 9. For this is the nature of the goſpel-covenant, it craveth conditions and duties of us, but filleth the hand with Chriſt wherewith to pay the maſter's rent, and we do anſwer all that is craved, with Chriſt, which maketh the craving gentler.

4. Chriſt is the covenant as he is the ſum of the promiſes and bleſſings of the covenant, which doth appear, 1. From the firſt diſcovering of the covenant, which had but one promiſe in it, and that was Chriſt; *Gen.* iii. 15. *The ſeed of the woman.* 2. From God's explication of the ſum of the promiſes and covenant, when it was more explicitly held forth to be Chriſt gifted to the people; *Gen.* xii. 3. *And in thee ſhall all the families of the earth be bleſſed.* Iſa. lv. 3. 4. *And I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witneſs to the people.* 3. This appears from the Holy Ghoſt's accounting Chriſt's coming to be the performing of the whole covenant and promiſes; *Luke* i. 69. 72. 73. *And hath raiſed up an horn of ſalvation for us, in the houſe of his ſervant David. To perform the mercy promiſed to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which he ſware unto our father Abraham.*

5. Chriſt is the ſum of all the properties of the covenant, not only becauſe whatſoever theſe properties ſpeak forth of the nature of that tranſaction, is to be found in Chriſt; but alſo and chiefly, becauſe Chriſt is the foundation of all theſe properties, as may appear by a ſhort account of the

properties

properties of the covenant, which are all comprised in Christ. As,

1*st*, The freeness of the covenant is comprised in Christ. The covenant of grace is free; or Christ freely *given to the people*, is the sum of the free covenant; yea, it is in and for Christ that the covenant is a free covenant: for the same righteousness, life, and covenant-blessings, which are freely promised and offered to us, were purchased by Christ, and a satisfaction given to the justice of God for them: and because he paid a price for them, therefore they are free gifts to us. He made all covenant-mercies free to us by covenant. I do not say that Christ was the cause of God's eternal transaction, which he purposed in himself; but that he is the cause of these effects of covenant-graces which come freely to us for his sake, who *bought them with a great price;* 1 Pet. i. 18. 19. *For we are not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold;——but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.*

2*dly*, The everlastingness of the covenant is comprised in Christ. The covenant is an everlasting covenant, and he is the everlasting God, and everlasting Mediator, who was *set up from the beginning, or ever the earth was*, Prov. viii. 23. Yea, it is in, and for, and through Christ, that the covenant of grace hath everlastingness in it. If we look backward, it could not have been everlasting, unless there had been another everlasting party for the everlasting Father to deal with; or, if we consider the everlastingness of the covenant, by looking forward, Christ is the foundation of that: and it is in, and for him, that the covenant in this respect, is everlasting: *Isa.* lix. 21. *As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my spirit that is*

upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed's ſeed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

3*dly*, The order of the covenant is compriſed in Chriſt. The covenant is a well-ordered covenant, and the order of the whole covenant-tranſaction is ſummed up in Chriſt, in whom the parties meet together in this order, God coming down to us in Chriſt, and we coming up to God in Chriſt: yea, all things that are ordered and diſpoſed concerning covenant grace and bleſſings, are ordered in him, and for him, and by him. The methods and ways of God's diſpenſing and ordering covenant-bleſſings, are in him, and through him, as the channel and conveyance thereof: *Eph.* i. 3. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt.*

4*thly*, The ſtability of the covenant is compriſed in Chriſt; *Chriſt is the ſame, yeſterday, to-day, and for evermore*, Heb. xiii. 8. Yea, he is the very ſtability of the covenant of grace: for all the promiſes of God *in him are yea, and in him are amen, to the glory of God by us*, 2 Cor. i. 20. Becauſe Chriſt is in the covenant, as a nail in a ſure place, and as a foundation and corner-ſtone, which cannot be removed; therefore ſtability and firmneſs is in the covenant, *Iſaiah* xxii. 23. Becauſe the covenant made with him is ſure, therefore the covenant made with us is ſure, *Pſal.* lxxxix. 33. 34. And becauſe Chriſt is *given for a covenant to the people*, therefore ſtability is given to the covenant, as an eſſential property thereof.

5*thly*, The perfection of the covenant of grace is compriſed in Chriſt. It is a perfect covenant, and he is a perfect and compleat Chriſt. It is a perfect

perfect covenant, becauſe Chriſt is in it, in whom ye are compleat, *Col.* ii. 9. 10. in whom dwelleth perfect fulneſs, and all deſirable perfections. If Chriſt had not been in it, perfection had not been in it; nor ſhould that covenant been able to perfect us for ever, but had left us as the covenant of works did, without help, without hope thereby. But becauſe God gave Chriſt for *the covenant of the people*, therefore perfection is in it, and came to us by it, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. *But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.*

6*thly*, The ſatisfactorineſs of the covenant of grace is compriſed in Chriſt; it is a ſoul-ſatisfying covenant, and he is a ſoul-ſatisfying Chriſt; 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 5. *For this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire.* Pſal. lxxii. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none in all the earth whom I would deſire beſides thee.* Yea, Chriſt is the foundation of that ſatisfaction which believers find by being within the covenant of grace. It is in and for him that the covenant is ſatisfying: if Chriſt were not in it, the believer ſhould never ſay of it, *This is all my deſire;* but becauſe he is in it, they ſay as *Pſal* xvi. 6. *The lines are fallen to me in pleaſant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.*

6. Chriſt is the covenant, as he is the ſum of all covenant-bleſſings. They are all abridged in him, *Col.* iii. 11. *He is all and in all.* 1*ſt*, Eminently, becauſe he is the chief bleſſing of the covenant. He is the marrow and fatneſs of the whole bargain, *John* iv. 10. 14. *If thou kneweſt the gift of God, and who it is that ſaith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldſt have aſked of him, and he ſhould have given thee living water. But whoſoever drinketh of the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt: but it ſhall be in him as a well of water ſpringing up unto eternal*

ternal life. 2*dly*, Comprehenſively, becauſe in him, as in a ſtorehouſe, all covenant-bleſſings are ſtored and treaſured up, *Col.* ii. 9. *For in him dwelleth the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*, John i. 14. 16. *The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth: and of his fulneſs have we all received, and grace for grace.* 3*dly*, Ultimately, becauſe he is that covenant-bleſſing for which the whole bargain is ſought after; and all other things are but ſought for him. 4*thly*, Virtually, becauſe where God giveth Chriſt, the whole covenant is reckoned to be performed, *Luke* i. 72. *To perform the mercy promiſed to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant.* 5*thly*, Conſequentially, becauſe all other covenant-bleſſings follow him, as acceſſions do follow any other principal thing; *Rom.* viii. 32. *He who ſpared not his own Son, but gave him up to the death for us; ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* Prov. viii. 25. *For whoſoever findeth me, findeth life, and ſhall obtain favour of the Lord.*

Some USE and IMPROVEMENT of this.

1. Is Chriſt *the covenant*, yea, *all the covenant?* This ſpeaks ſad reproof to ſundry ſorts of perſons. As,

1*ſt*, To thoſe who ſeek ſomething elſe, the ſtrength of whoſe purpoſes is laid upon ſomething inferior to Chriſt; *who ſpend their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which ſatisfieth not*, Iſa. lv. 2.; *who compaſs themſelves about with ſparks of their own kindling; ſeeking an happineſs where it is not to be found.*

2*dly*, To ſuch as ſeek and follow after ſomething more than Chriſt, who is all the covenant. Alas, how many behave as if there were not a full bleſſing in Chriſt! Chriſt alone without other things in

in the world, cannot content them, tho' beſides Chriſt all things are vanity and a lie. Without Chriſt, whatever ye may enjoy, tho' it were the peculiar treaſure of kings and princes, all is vanity and vexation of ſpirit. How vain is their purſuit who live without Chriſt, and are always ſaying, *Who will ſhew us any good?*

3*dly*, It ſpeaks ſad reproof to thoſe who feel ſomething leſs than Chriſt, whom life and ſalvation would ſatisfy: a created heaven without Chriſt would anſwer their deſires after happineſs. How many ſit down ſatisfied with a ſhort preſent ſpiritual allowance, but ſeek not all in Chriſt, with him, through him, and from him, like the diſciples, *Mark* ix. 5. 6. who ſpoke of building tabernacles in the mount, and forgat that their happineſs lay in Chriſt himſelf, whatever ſhould be the degree and manner of his manifeſting himſelf to them! Many deprive themſelves of the comfort to be had in covenanting and ſealing times, becauſe they deſire their comfort more from the frame of their hearts, than from Chriſt the *covenant*, a ſure foundation of comfort and hope, when all other comforts and deſireable things do fail.

2. Is Chriſt the *covenant?* then let this be improven for commending Chriſt to you. And from this view of him as *the covenant*, learn,

1*ſt*, To ſee the neceſſity of receiving Chriſt, and of being in him, without which we can have no right to the covenant, nor to the ſeals of it, nor to any thing contained in the covenant. If it were poſſible for you to receive all that is in the goſpel-offer, and not to receive Chriſt, all theſe things without him could not change your covenant-ſtate, *Eph.* ii. 12. If you continue *without Chriſt*, you are ſtill without *the covenant*. They who are in covenant with God, are ſaid to be *in Chriſt*, Rom. viii. 1.

2*dly*, Learn

2*dly*, Learn hence the way how God's confederated people ſhould come to God, and receive the ſeal of the covenant. It is not enough that we come to God and bring Chriſt with us, a third perſon; but we muſt alſo come to God, as being in Chriſt, as being *one with him*, John xv. 2. This is to come to God through Chriſt: Chriſt and you muſt be one myſtical perſon; and then what acceſs the wonderful *Immanuel* hath to the Father, you ſhall have the ſame.

3*dly*, Be perſuaded to take him who is given of God *for a covenant*. Make Chriſt your own, and you make all the bargain your own. We beſeech you to receive the gift, that draweth all the covenant along with it. It may be concerning to you, to know when you receive Chriſt as the covenant; for which take the following things for anſwer. As, 1*ſt*, When you receive the very bonds of the word, and that which doth moſt croſs your corruption. 2*dly*, When you embrace and kiſs the promiſes; when you love them dearly, and welcome them kindly, for the good that is in them, and for the aſſurance of enjoying all through Chriſt, in whom they *are all yea and amen*. 3*dly*, When we find ſomething ſweeter and better in the promiſe than ſalvation, even Chriſt himſelf. A temporary believer may receive the word with joy, and the promiſes of it: but how? for the ſalvation that is in the word. But the believer finds ſomething in the promiſes better than ſalvation, even Chriſt, the *chief among ten thouſand*; which made *Peter* ſay, as *John* vi. 68. *Lord, to whom ſhall we go but unto thee? thou haſt the words of eternal life.*

4*thly*, Since God giveth Chriſt for all the covenant, be then perſuaded to take him for all and to make uſe of him for all. As, (1.) To fulfil all the promiſes of the covenant to you, for us, 2 *Cor.*

Cor. i. 20. *In him they are yea, and in him they are amen.* (2.) But, alas! are you saying, I cannot do what God in his covenant requireth of me; I cannot get my heart engaged to approach unto God? Look to Christ, as the Covenant engaged to work that in you, which he requireth of you. He will enable you to believe; he will make you *willing in the day of his power:* he stands engaged for it, *John* vi. 37. *That all whom the Father hath given him, shall come unto him.* He is bound by the covenant, of which you are this day to receive the seal, to perform the duties in you which the covenant requireth of you. *He will work in you, to will and to do of his good pleasure,* Phil. ii. 13. Coming to God through him, whom God hath *given to be a covenant of the people,* when you are weak in yourselves, you shall become strong, you shall be enabled to *do all things through Christ strengthening you,* Phil. iv. 13. You are to seal a covenant this day; but first make sure an interest in him whom God hath *given* for *the covenant,* and then the seal shall not be put to a blank. Make sure an interest in Christ, and then you shall be established in him, and shall be sealed with *the earnest of the Spirit in your hearts,* 2 Cor. i. 21. 22. *He will shed abroad his love in your hearts,* will cause you to feel the constraining power and influence thereof on your soul, and make you to *remember his love more than wine.*

The FIRST TABLE *Service.*

The THIRD GENERAL HEAD, is, to shew what is imported in Christ's being *given for a covenant of the people.* I. Christ's being *a covenant of the people* importeth, that in our covenanting with God, Christ must be upon our side; his name must be in our band. This is the way to co-

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venant with God with comfort and hope. Alas! we reap not the benefit of covenanting with God, because we set not about the work with God on our side. Many under the convictions of sin, do purpose and resolve against it for the future; they vow and promise, and then they think all is well; but all the time they are not divorced from the law as a covenant of works, and then when they break their resolutions, they are afraid of God as *Adam* was after he had sinned. No comfort nor covenant-establishment can they have, that seek it in this way: no comfort, if Christ stand not jointly with us in our covenanting with God. What can we do in remembering Christ the *covenant of the people*, if we do not receive him as gifted of God to the people, and give him back again to God for our part of the covenant? We are covenant-breakers, and cannot covenant to be the Lord's, if Christ be not our surety. Behold we bring you glad tidings of great joy, good news for broken sinners, who have made themselves irresponsible, who cannot fulfil the covenant of works, nor answer the charge of the law themselves; Christ is cautioner and on your side, he hath undertaken the debt, and hath discharged it; he hath borne all the wrath due to you, hath fulfilled the law broken by you; and now there is nothing required of you covenant-ways but he is answerable for. Therefore you may say with a holy confidence, *I have sworn and I will perform*, because my covenant surety and cautioner is law-abiding, and hath given a proof of his grace and confirmation of his covenant-love.

Who, in the night he was betrayed, took bread, &c.

O! be now admiring the love which made Christ undertake for you, and come under an act of

of cautionry for you; in putting his name in your bond, and standing upon your side. Behold how he loved you! read a demonstration of his love, in every thing he acted as your covenant, in every state wherein he carried your condition, in every act wherein he acted your part; in his being broken for you; in his acting for you, and in you. Is it not strange, that they who seek for proofs and demonstrations of his love, should neglect so great a proof of it, that when we were bankrupts, and had no credit for covenanting with God, should have such a covenant-party provided for us, by which our covenant-state may be repaired? O how sweet must the remembrance of it be to a believing communicant! that Christ is surety and cautioner for the people, and that his suretyship reacheth unto the whole covenant, to every condition and command in it, to every promise in it, to fulfil them all, to pay all your debt, and to perform all our duty, to work all our work, and to undergo all our punishment.

After supper he took the cup, &c.

Is Christ *given to be a covenant of the people,* to be on either side of the covenant, as well as bound to accomplish all that God hath promised them, hath said he will do to them, and for them? Then are you in Christ's debt beyond all reckoning that can be made of it. It shall be your work through eternity, to cast up the sum of the debt of grace you are under. You shall never be able to requite him; you shall through all eternity remain his debtors for his undertaking and engaging for you, for his paying that which he undertook; for his discharging of our debt, and for his reporting his Father's discharge of it. You are in Christ's debt for undertaking that for you unrequested;

that he did consent to put his name in your bond, and to subscribe a satisfaction to the violated law; you are in his debt for paying so great a ransom, as 1 *Pet.* i. 18. 19. You are in his debt for the fair acquittance and discharge which he hath obtained and received for you; that now you have the cup of the new testament in your hand, shed for the remission of sins. You are in his debt for all that he hath wrought in you, from the time that he first bowed your will to believe, unto this day; for every piece of your obedience; for all your fruit, for every duty performed by you, for all the influences of his Spirit upon you.

Now, you have been partaking of the seal of God's covenant, learn to deal with God in all things pertaining to his covenant; as having Christ engaged to you, and for you, whether you be in any doubtfulness about the promises, or in any difficulty and perplexity about the duties of the covenant, till your dealings declare that you took to Christ; and this gives you confidence and boldness, *Heb.* iv. 16. In your dealings with God that you need not flee, as ashamed to be seen in God's presence: do but present Christ in your place and room, and he is satisfied. Now, come to Christ as to a person already engaged for you, as unto one whose honour lieth at the stake, for a performance of all things, whatsoever are contained in the covenant. In your dealings with your duty, and with the law which commandeth it: you are not to flee the command, as the broken debtor doth the face of the creditor, like them who are not law-abiding; but you are now through Christ on your side, and in covenant with you, to welcome every command and charge of the law, as being in some near capacity to speak with it, and give it some satisfying

tisfying answer: *Heb.* x. 19. 22. *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus——Let us draw near with a true heart: in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* Heb. iv. 14. 16. *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens.——Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

The SECOND TABLE *Service.*

II. Christ's being given for a *covenant of the people* importeth, that he is one taken from among the people. Here the comfort of the work of the day, to remember the wonderful condescendency of the redeeming love, *Psal.* lxxxix. 19. *That God hath laid our help upon One that is mighty, and hath exalted One chosen out of the people.* The nature that had sinned behoved to satisfy, tho' no satisfaction could have been given, if the Redeemer had not been God as well as man. *Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh,* 1 Tim. iii. 16. *The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* O the glory of *Immanuel, God with us!* Had he been only God, his awful and *terrible Majesty had made us afraid;* we could never have thoughts of enjoying communion with the great and dreadful God: had he been only man, we could have had no hope from the merits of his obedience and death. But our covenanted and covenanting Redeemer is the great God, and therefore mighty to save. He is God in our nature, who hath *a feeling of our infirmities*; therefore we may come

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to him, and to God through him, with a holy boldneſs.——O how bleſſed is their ſtate who are within the bond of the covenant! you are not *come to the mountain that cannot be touched, but to Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant.* Alas, ſay you, how ſhall we have covenant with God? you may with boldneſs approach to God with your ſervice. You may lay hold on his covenant, and claim the bleſſings and privileges thereof; for God is come near to you, he deals with you in your nature, to put between you and his anger, one in your nature to ſpeak for you, when you cannot, dare not ſpeak for yourſelves. When you think on your guiltineſs, that you deſerve nothing but wrath, behold *the covenant of the people* procuring bleſſings for you, when you deſerved none; behold him making proviſion for you, when you are needy; ſupplying your wants, when you were poor and ſorrowful; making his ſalvation to lift you on high.

In that night——he took bread, &c.

Now is a fit time when remembering Chriſt, *the covenant of the people,* broken for you, to be meditating on his appearings, acting and mediating in your nature, as an unparallelled inſtance of condeſcending love; that the immortal God ſhould become mortal fleſh. The breach between us and God could not be otherwiſe made up; a broken Chriſt, the repairing of the breach that ſin hath made between God and you, and through him a covenant of peace between God and you is made up. O think of it, ye who have broken with God, and could never repair your breach; conſider the honour and advantage you have by a God in your nature; a covenant eſtabliſhed through one in your nature; the glorious communion which you now have with God in your nature; now the covenant

venant is with one of the people, who, at the same time, is the great God, *Tit.* ii. 3. *He is both God and man in one person.* He is God, that he may deal effectually with God, for man; for who can have access to deal with God, but a person who is God, to deal with an angry God: that he may deal with man, for God, he must be man; for man cannot endure the voice and presence of God immediately; man without a Mediator cannot speak with God; but lo! here a chosen One, exalted out of the people, by whom we deal with God, and with confidence lay hold on his covenant.

After supper,——the cup, &c.

O the distinguishing love that is here! Christ in our nature, given to be *a covenant of the people,* Rom. v. 8. *God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.* And here the mystery of amazing love, shining forth thro' him, who is *the covenant of the people,* that the great God will take on him our nature; *that thro' death he might destroy him who hath the power of death, that is, the devil,* Heb. ii. 14. That he would become *a man of sorrows,* and live as an example of sufferings: and therefore, though without sin, he would take upon him our nature at the worst; he would *endure the cross, and despise the shame;* he would *be made perfect thro' sufferings;* he would *be made under the law, and become a curse for us, that the curse of the law might not reach us, but be taken away from us.* O let us admire and wonder at the love that made him thus condescend; let us raise up our hearts to thankfulness, that the *covenant of the people* is God of the people, is God in our nature, by which we may be assured of his readiness

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to receive us into his covenant. We may deal familiarly with him, as two near and dear friends do with one another; he is now become our near kinſman. Let us take this mutation of our nature, by a perſonal union with the divine, as a pledge of the fulfilling all other promiſes, *Rom.* viii. 32. *Let us take boldneſs to come to God thro' Chriſt.* The great courtier of heaven is of our kindred; take courage, and improve the favour and friendſhip that our brother hath in heaven. Let this encourage ſuch as are afraid to draw near to God, for union and reconciliation with him; he is willing to unite himſelf to thee, by virtue of his union with our nature. When we find difficulties in drawing near to God, and languiſh in the life of our faith, let us learn to draw near to God through the vail of Chriſt's fleſh; *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us——Through him we have acceſs by one Spirit to the Father,* Eph. ii. 14. 18.

The THIRD TABLE *Service.*

III. The Lord Jeſus being *given for a covenant of the people* importeth, that there is now no diſtinction between *Jew* or *Gentile*, bond or free: all nations and tongues may come and claim an intereſt in Chriſt. He hath taken on him a general relation to human nature; all men, ſinners, and the chief of ſinners, are called to believe on him, whatever their caſe and condition be: thro' Chriſt we have a new and better covenant-ſtate wherein we ſtand. We owe our being in Chriſt, and in the covenant of grace, to Chriſt, who undertook for the people, and for the worſt of them, to bring about that bond of engagement between God and us. If Chriſt had not become the *covenant*

nant of the people, this had never been done. Poor people, who are now adventuring upon the ſeal of the covenant, but are afraid of going a whoring from him; think of this advantage you have by Chriſt's being a *covenant of the people*, that there can be no reverſing, repelling, or annulling of this covenant with you; and if it were not for that, a divorce ſhould follow upon the whorings and treacherous dealings of our hearts every day, *Pſal.* lxxxix. 30. *&c. If his children forſake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my ſtatutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I viſit their tranſgreſſion with the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes; nevertheleſs, my loving-kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the word that is gone out of my lips.* Jer. xxxii. 39. 40. *And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever. And I will make an everlaſting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.* This may give the people boldneſs in all diſtreſſes, to lay their weight upon him, who is given to be *a covenant of the people*; confidence to come to him, with the words of the prophet, *Iſa.* xxxviii. 14. *O Lord, I am oppreſſed, undertake for me.* Our work now is, to remember him whom God hath given to be *a covenant of the people.* If we be afraid of engaging to the duties of God's covenanted people, we are dealing with God in our own ſtrength; but when in the ſtrength of our *covenant of the people*, what work is too hard for him? what difficulties can ſtand before him? O how doth it ſweeten the remembrance of him, that in the work of our *redemption, he travails in the*

greatneſs of his ſtrength, is mighty to ſave. Iſa. xiii. 1.

In that night——he took bread, &c.

Now, the purpoſes of your hearts may be, "I "have ſinned, and will not do ſo any more: I "have broken covenant, but henceforth I will a-"bide no longer in my breaches." But tho' it be your duty to reſolve to keep covenant with God, your ſtrongeſt purpoſes will not keep you ſtedfaſt in his covenant. "Alas, you ſay, what ſhall then be-"come of us?" Look to him who is the *covenant of the people.* The covenant ſtands faſt with this broken Chriſt, that the bargain may never be broken, nor fly up between God and you. Lean to nothing for ſupport or relief, for comfort or hope, but to him who is *the covenant of the people.* Take not caution from your own hearts, for any thing commanded you in the covenant that is now ſealing between God and you; neither your reſolutions, gifts nor graces, nor preſent frame of your hearts, will make you hold it out: you muſt be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt, looking ſtill to a broken Chriſt, that he would be *ever mindful of his covenant,* Pſal. cxi. 5.

After ſupper——the cup, &c.

Now, it concerneth us all to know if Chriſt the *covenant of the people* hath taken us within the bond of his covenant, of which we are now receiving the ſeal. Therefore, *1ſt,* If you be within the bond of the covenant of grace, or be comprehended in his teſtament, you can remember the time when you were *aliens from the commonwealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe,* Eph. ii. 12. *2dly,* He hath acted the covenant

covenant upon your hearts. According as it is foretold, that he will fulfil it effectually in his people, he now fulfils the promises to you, in putting his law in your inward parts, in writing it in your hearts; he *becomes your God, and makes you his people*, Jer. xxxii. 33. *3dly*, He hath taken your name out of the law writ and curse, and hath put it in the gospel-writ, and made you *seek redemption in his blood, and forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace*, Eph. i. 7. *4thly*, He hath made you go out of yourselves, and find in your heart to engage him for you, and to lay the weight of your eternal interest upon him, *Phil.* iii. 8. *5thly*, When any duty or temptation is above our reach, when any trouble or difficulty is too strong for us, we then come to Christ, as unto one who has engaged with us, and for us; and this gives encouragement under all the difficulties that may be between us and the end of our journey. 2 *Cor.* iii. 5. *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.* Therefore we proceed, committing our way to the Lord, trusting also in him, that *he will perfect that which concerns us.* We are to believe in him, that he will keep us from temptation, and keep us in the hour of temptation; *that our faith fail not*, Luke xxii. 32.; and that when we are tempted, we shall escape and be delivered therefrom: and especially, he hath a concern for them who in times of degeneracy and decaying, strive to *stand fast in the faith*, and to *keep the word of his patience*, Rev. iii. 10. *I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them who dwell on the earth.*

The FOURTH TABLE *Service.*

IV. I now proceed to make, besides what hath

been done, upon every particular head, a general APPLICATION OF THE WHOLE.

1. This doctrine is to be improven for trial, whether you be in Christ, in the covenant of grace, or have taken hold of him whom God hath *given for a covenant of the people:* if you have no right to Christ, then, none to the covenant. Try by this; 1*st*, By your divorcement from idols, and all other lovers. An interest in Christ, *the covenant of the people*, breaks all former engagements, whether to lusts or creatures: *Gal.* v. 24. *They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.* Psal. xlv. 10. 11. *Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy father's house. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty.* 2*dly*, Try it by your consenting to the mutual tie which the covenant bringeth with it; for it doth not only hold forth what Christ will be to you, but what ye will be to him. It obliges you to be the Lord's, as well as to make him yours: *Hos.* iii. 3. *Thou shalt not be for another man, so will I be for thee.* You consent as willingly to be Christ's as to have him made yours. 3*dly*, Try it by your subjection and submission unto Christ; as unto your Head, Husband, Lord, and King. There must be a thorough closure with Christ, in all his offices, and in every part of each of his offices. 4*thly*, Try it by your satisfaction with, and application of, the whole bargain, without alteration of any clause of it, not dividing the promises of the covenant from the commands of it, nor refusing or neglecting any thing that he hath put into the bargain: *Psal.* lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and besides thee there is none in all the earth whom I desire.* The covenant beareth all your salvation in it, and all your desire, if to it, 2 *Sam* xxii. 45.

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In that night——he took bread, &c.

5thly, Try your intereſt in the *covenant of the people,* by your ſuperlative valuing of Chriſt. The weakeſt faith which is true, doth value Chriſt above all, 1 *Pet.* ii. 7. *To you that believe he is precious.* Prov. iii. 15. He is *more precious than rubies; and all the things that thou canſt deſire, are not to be compared with him.* "O, ſay you, "that we knew if we had this ſuperlative value "for him!" Then, (1.) Chriſt alone, without all other comforts, is looked upon as enough, *Pſal.* lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I?* &c. You will reckon yourſelves eternally made up in him, and will bleſs yourſelves in him, *Lam.* iii. 24. *The Lord is my portion, ſaith my ſoul, therefore will I hope in him.* (2.) When you value Chriſt out of love, and not out of neceſſity, *Pſal.* cxvi. 1. *I love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard my voice and my ſupplication.* (3.) When the excellencies of Chriſt do affect the heart to ſeek him, and the *deſire of our ſouls to be to him, and to the remembrance of his name.* (4.) When we are not eaſily offended at him. There is not any thing more eaſily argueth a low eſteem of Chriſt, than a readineſs to be eaſily ſtumbled at him, or at any thing in his way with us; and on the other hand, not any thing argueth a higher eſteem of him, "Let him do what he will, yet will I go after him; "let me meet with what ſtumbleth others, yet "through his grace will I hold on my way." *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him,* Job xiii. 15.

After ſupper,——the cup, &c.

6thly, Try your intereſt in the covenant, of which now

now you are receiving the seal, by a trust in, and dependence upon, a covenant sealed with Christ's blood. You will meet with many doubts that will arise in your hearts concerning your covenant-interest, you will meet with many temptations and discouragements; but under all these you will take courage under the sprinkling of the blood of the covenant, which the Lord maketh with you this day. If there be any doubt with you about the performance of the promise, the *covenant of the people* assures a performance of all these things which are spoken by the Lord, *Luke* i. 45. If there be any doubt because of something too hard for you required in the covenant, you shall be enabled to *do all thro' Christ strengthening you*, Phil. iv. 13. If you fear your standing, *Christ prays for you, that your faith fail not*, Luke xxii. 32. If you fear your backslidings, your decaying and withering in grace, you see him engaged for influences to you, *Isa.* xliv. 3. 4. *To pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground: he will pour his spirit upon you, and make you spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses.* If your strength fail and decay, *he will make you to renew your strength*, Isa. xl. 3. If your legs fail, and thro' weakness decay, *Isa.* xl. 11. 29. *He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs with his arm, he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength.* If you want a ransom to present to offended justice, behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord now maketh with you.

7thly, If you be interested in Christ, the *covenant of the people*, then your duty to your covenanted Lord, which others reckon a burden, you account a privilege; *his commandments will not be grievous*

vous to you, for the love of Christ will constrain you, 2 Cor. v. 14.

8*thly*, If you be interested in Christ, you will have equal desires after holiness and heaven, after conformity to Christ, as communion with him: your endeavours will be as vigorous after sanctification, as salvation: 2 *Cor.* vii. 1. *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* Yea, 9*thly*, You will be humbled and provoked to holiness by your knowledge of your being in Christ. You reflect upon the greatness of the privilege with humbling admiration, 1 *Tim.* i. 11. 14. And how humbly doth *David* dedicate himself to the Lord, when reflecting upon what he had done for him? *Psal.* cxvi. 16. *O Lord, I am thy servant, truly I am thy servant, the son of thine handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds.* 17. *I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.* 18. *I will pay my vows unto the Lord, in the presence of all his people.*

The FIFTH TABLE *Service.*

2. Is Christ given for *a covenant of the people?* Let this be improven for discovering how far we fall short in practical giving to Christ his own place in the covenant. There be very few of those who dare not knowingly slight Christ, who do yet give him his own room in the covenant. O communicants! consider this matter seriously. 1*st*, That the Lord who now allows you the honour of sealing a covenant with himself, is the root and original of the covenant. Have you acknowledged him as such? Have your soul-transactions with God been grounded upon Christ's transactions with him? Or have you not in point of soul covenant-

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ing with God, dealt as if the covenant had its firſt riſe then, when it firſt entered into your hearts? Conſider, I pray, where you have pitched the original, riſe, and foundation of that bleſſed tranſaction. 2*dly*, Chriſt is the principal party with whom the covenant was made. Do ye always give that place to Chriſt? Do ye put him foremoſt? Or, do you not rather drudge him after you? I fear we deal in covenanting with God, as if we were the principal party covenanting; in matters of goſpel-promiſes, as if we were the principal creditor to whom a performance of theſe things were due; and in matter of goſpel-commands, as if we were the principal debtors from whom a performance of duty were to be expected. 3*dly*, Chriſt is the chief bleſſing of the covenant. Have you ſought him as ſuch? or hath any other bleſſing of the covenant had his room in your heart? Have you ſought life and ſalvation in the promiſes, as the chief bleſſing contained in them? or have you ſeen ſomething in the promiſes better and more deſirable than theſe, even Chriſt, who is in every promiſe, and is the bleſſing in the promiſe? In this way you will be in condition to remember Chriſt's dying love. Who,

In that night,——took bread, &c.

So that, 4*thly*, Chriſt *the covenant of the people*, whoſe body was broken for you, is valuable above all things elſe contained in the covenant. He is the full price of the whole bargain. Have you put, or are you putting this value upon him? Have you made him your all, your treaſure for which you treated in this bargain? 5*thly*, Chriſt is the ſampler and firſt copy of the covenant. Are you now conſidering how the peace and union was firſt made in his perſon? Have you followed that bleſſ-

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ed copy, to have this your Covenant with God the divine nature coming down to you, and you brought up to meet with God and Chriſt, and with him and in him, to have the myſtical union? *6thly*, Chriſt is the ſum of the covenant. Have you ſtudied this compend well? Do you reduce all the covenant to Chriſt? Do you find it all in him? Do you deſire all the bleſſings of the covenant from him? Do you in all your covenant-tranſactions ſeek his glory? Do you ſeek to make all your covenantings with him? to praiſe him as *the Lamb that was ſlain, who is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing?* Rev. v. 12.

After ſupper——the cup, &c.

3. Is Chriſt *given for a covenant of the people?* Then behold a comfortable view of Chriſt in his covenanting with you, and in your receiving the ſeal of the covenant. If we look upon the covenant aright, there is no part of it but we may behold Chriſt engraven upon it: he is the precious ſubject-matter of the whole, and of every part of the covenant, whether they be, *1ſt*, Things covenanted by God to us. Chriſt is graven upon every promiſe, bleſſing, and privilege of the covenant. The righteouſneſs and life to which we are reſtored, are the righteouſneſs and life of Chriſt; *he is the Lord our righteouſneſs*, Jer. xxiii. 6. Col. iii. 2. 3. *Set your affection on things above, and not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God.* The ſon-ſhip, the ſpirit, the grace, the title to God, they are our partnerſhip of Chriſt's ſonſhip, his Spirit, his grace, his covenant-intereſt in God: *Rom.* viii. 17. *If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt.* Gal. iv. 6. Ye receive *the Spirit of* the *Son*

into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 2*dly*, Whether they be things reſtipulated by us, as duties incumbent on God's covenanted people, Chriſt is engraven on theſe The faith accepting covenant grace and bleſſings, is the faith of the Son of God, *Gal.* ii. 20. The holineſs and worthy walking whereunto we are called, is that ſame thing whereunto we are choſen and called in Chriſt Jeſus, *Eph.* ii. 10.

Therefore, 4. Chriſt being the *covenant of the people*, and being graven on every promiſe and bleſſing thereof, may be improven for comforting your hearts, and quieting your minds, when diſquieted becauſe you do not reap the fruit of covenant-promiſes, and that goſpel-commands do not find that obedience with you which is due to them; this is your affliction, and makes you walk heavily: for, 1*ſt*, Becauſe what obedience the goſpel hath not yet had in you it ſhall have, ſince the covenant of the people is engaged, *Pſal.* cxxxviii. 8. to *perfect that which concerns you*, and that he will not forſake the work of his hands. 2*dly*, What the law and goſpel cannot find in you, they ſhall have it in him, *Rom.* x. 4. *For Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.* 3*dly*, Chriſt hath already ſatisfied for your diſobedience, *Heb.* ix. 15. *For this cauſe he is the Mediator of the new teſtament, that by means of death, they who are called may receive the promiſe of the eternal inheritance.*

5. Is Chriſt given *for a covenant of the people?* Learn to put nothing in Chriſt's room and place, as your covenant. Surely not your gifts and graces, as if theſe would make you forth-coming in duty; not your purpoſes and reſolutions, for theſe will not do it; not any preſent warmneſs of your frame. Remember, that it is the *covenant of the people* who maketh your hearts ſoft;

you must therefore daily be deriving life and influence from him, *going up from the wilderness leaning upon him,* Song viii. 5. *Because he lives, you shall live also,* John xiv. 19. And as you live through him, and continue leaning upon him, *you shall not die, but live, and declare the works of God,* Psal. cxviii. 17.

What of the foregoing subject follows, was to have been delivered after the tables, and on Monday *the day of thanksgiving.*

6. Is Christ given *for a covenant of the people?* How miserable is their case whose agreement with hell and death is not yet broken? who *are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise? who are without God, and without Christ, and so without hope in the world?* Eph. ii. 12. This is the condition of all mankind by nature; they come not to Christ; they lay not hold on him whom God *hath given,* &c. because they see not their need of him, *Matth.* ix. 12. *The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.* If people saw their need of him, they would improve every occasion of his coming their way; like the blind men who sat by the way side, when, *Matth.* xx. 29. *they heard that Jesus passed by.* Will they pretend to praise Christ *the covenant of the people,* who neglect the opportunities and seasons of the Lord's grace? who when called to the marriage of the King's Son, one hath *his farm, another his merchandise, to mind?* he has not time to consider the Apostle and High Priest of his profession; the world and the enjoyments of it do mar his concern, that he cannot comfort himself with the thoughts of *the covenant of the people* being his God; and therefore communion and covenanting occasions are either

quite neglected by him, or are slightly and formally gone about; though *they come before God as his people do, and shew much outward regard, yet their hearts go after their covetousness*, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. They know the Lord's words, but they do them not. Will it be pretended that they have a cordial regard for Christ, who shun being found in the galleries where he walks, or in the use of these ordinances in which he manifests himself and his covenant to the people? Or will they pretend to have received Christ as *given for a covenant of the people*, who are not fond of every occasion of his sealing and confirming the covenant with them, and of giving them fresh tokens of covenant grace, mercy and love? When you saw your lost estate without Christ, how precious was an offered Saviour to you then? Hath Christ lost his worth and value, that you do not desire him and the blessings of his covenant to be forth-coming to you? That cannot be the case; but ye have not an abiding sense of his glory, and the need ye have of him, or else you would prize every opportunity of communion with him; yea, nothing but him, and more of the knowledge of him, would satisfy you at every communion; of which if you have missed, inquire narrowly into the cause. If you are not believers in Christ, you *know not God, nor obey the gospel of Christ: you cannot walk with him until you be agreed.* Be therefore concerned that you may be reconciled to God by the death of his Son; then shall all the rich treasures of his grace and mercy be opened unto you. Though you have sinned in presuming to lay hold on the seal of his covenant, there is no help for you, but to plead his covenant mercy and grace, that you may be forgiven, *Eph.* i. 7. *Redemption in Christ's blood, and the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace.* If you be such as have seen

seen your need of Christ, and would fain have had at this communion renewed manifestations of his covenant-love, but complain that these have been denied you, and you are the same dead, barren, and lifeless creatures as you were; beware lest your desire has been more after some liveliness of frame, than after Christ himself, who is all the covenant; more for some good from him, than that you may be enabled to do some good for him, that he may be glorified in you and by you. Perhaps you have been seeking more an enlarged frame, or the sensible sweetness of it, than that Christ the covenant of the people may be magnified and glorified in you and by you; therefore that he may be all your salvation and all your desire, instead of refreshing spiritual allowances, you are borne down with heart plagues and spiritual distresses, that you may see there is no help for you but in him whom God hath given to *be a covenant of the people, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the Israel of God: to bring the prisoners out of the prison, and them that sit in darkness, out of the prison-house.*

7. Is Christ *given for a covenant of the people?* then here is comfort and encouragement to believing communicants. As, *1st*, Comfort yourselves in the bargain you have made: Christ is in the covenant, and is given *as a covenant of the people*, and therefore all shall be well, sure and firm. Comfort yourselves against your being short of others in worldly enjoyments; Christ is given you for a *covenant*, but not unto them. O wonder at it, and be comforted with him who said, *How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?* You can own Christ, and claim him as yours, in covenant with you; they cannot. *2dly*, Comfort yourselves against all snares, dangers, temptations, and storms that can blow

blow against you in your way to heaven. Christ is in the covenant, and that shall be your safety; as the disciples were safe at sea against the greatest tempests, because Christ was in the ship with them, *Matth.* viii. 13. Consider that he is embarked with you, and will bring you safe to land: 1 *John* iv. 4. *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world.* 3*dly*, Comfort yourselves against all your wants and weaknesses, and all your miseries of your present condition, Christ is in the covenant, and though you be foolish, he is wise, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. *Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* Though you be weak, he is strong, *Psal.* lxxxix. 19. *I have laid help upon one that is mighty.* Though you be faithless, yet he is faithful; though you be nothing, yet Christ is all, *Col.* iii. 11. *Whatsoever is wanting in you, is abounding in him;* and if you abuse not the grace of God, by *turning it into wantonness*, it is all one, if it is betwixt you. It is as good and much better to be in him than in you; for if he be given unto you, all comes with him *who is made of God unto you wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.* 2. Let believers in Christ who have received him who was given *for a covenant of the people*, take courage and boldness God-ward, in all you have to do with him. For, 1*st*, Having received Christ for a *covenant of the people*, you may pray and deal confidently with God, as though Christ did beseech God by you. 2*dly*, You have gotten Christ, and nothing shall be denied you, *Rom.* viii. 32. *He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* 3*dly*, You have received more than you know of, even him who says, *I am the way,*

way, the truth, and the life. You have all the covenant, if you have Christ. *4thly,* You have received more than you want, a greater thing than ever you shall be capable to need or want hereafter; for how great soever your wants be, you cannot conceive them to be so great, as Christ who is given you, *Phil.* iv. 19. *My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.* 2 Cor. ix. 8. *And is able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work.*

8. Is Christ given for *a covenant of the people?* then here is comfort and support for faith, reaching to all the evils wherewith believers in Christ may be afflicted. As, *1st,* It may comfort them against the daily infirmities wherewith they are encompassed; these shall not make a breach between God and you; whereas Christ *the covenant of the people* prevents that, 1 *John* ii. 1. *And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Christ the righteous.* *2dly,* Against the many challenges, whether of an accusing conscience, or of the great accuser of the brethren. *Rom.* viii. 33. 34. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* &c. *3dly,* Against the more foul and gross stumblings of believers, *Luke* xxii. 32. The *covenant of the people* prays for them, *that their faith fail not.* *4thly,* Against the fear of their falling away from the blessed covenant-state, with which fear believers have been often tossed, *Psal.* li. 11. *Cast me not away from thy presence, nor take thy holy Spirit from me.* Psal. xi. 15. *Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.* It is by Christ the *covenant of the people,* that we have establishment in grace: *Rom.* v. 10. *For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled by the death of his Son, much more being reconci-*

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led, we shall be saved by his life. 5*thly*, Against the manifold afflictions wherewith believers are tossed here. The *covenant of the people* was himself sometimes an afflicted man, went through much suffering, and had the feeling of these, *Isaiah* liii. 3. 7. *A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. —He was oppressed, and he was afflicted.* 6*thly*, Against the many temptations of all kinds, which occasion much heaviness in believers, who often are in heaviness through much temptation, 1 *Pet.* i 6. The *covenant of the people* had the experience of all sorts of temptations, and now sympathiseth with his people in like condition, *Heb.* ii. 17. 18. *For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.* Heb. iv. 15. *For we have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* 7*thly*, Against the empty and needy condition unto which believers are subject, through the manifold wants with which they are daily pressed. We have confidence through Christ the *covenant of the people*, to come speed in every petition that is acceptable to God, and profitable to us, *John* xiv. 13. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.* 1 John v. 14. 15. *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.* 8*thly*, Against the fear of death, which is terrible to nature, *John* xi. 25. *Jesus saith, I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.* John xvii. 2. *As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.* 9*thly*, Against the second

cond appearing of Christ, which sometimes without cause is terrible to believers, and the last judgment that shall be given concerning their everlasting interests. Christ the *covenant of the people*, and on whom you have laid hold as all your covenant-hope, will sit as Judge. *He will keep you from falling, and present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy*, Jude 24.

9. Is Christ *given for a covenant of the people?* Then learn to know the need of your interest in Christ, and the need that all have of improving this covenant-interest. As, *1st*, Let natural men be convinced of this. If you have none to deal for you, you must stand or fall by your own righteousness; without Christ you must do for yourselves, or be undone: by no covenant but Christ *the covenant of the people*, can the guilty creature stand, or deal with God. *2dly*, Let believers be convinced of this. It is not natural men only who need Christ to make their peace, and to change their covenant-state; but you also who have believed and received Christ as given *for a covenant of the people*, and at the Lord's table have been renewing your choice and acceptance of him. You need him, (1.) At all times, before and after justification: *Rom.* v. 6. 10. *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.* You need him to make your peace; you need him still, till you be in over the threshold of glory. (2.) You need him to all intents and purposes, as well relating to your covenant state as to your duties; not only for your persons to make your peace, but also for your performances to procure them acceptance: *Rom.*

iii. 4. *Being justified by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* (3.) You need him in all things pertaining to God. Whatever you have to do, if it be a thing that relates to God, *Heb.* ii. 17. *He is a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.* If you have any direction to receive from God, you need him to give it; if you have any blessing to receive, you need him to procure it to you, and receive it for you. If you have any service to offer to God, any duty to perform, you need Christ the *covenant of the people,* to afford you strength to perform, and to offer it to God for you. If you have any evil to deprecate, you need him to avert it, whether it be for sins before or after conversion. In all cases, not only in your deadness and indisposition for duties, but when your heart is in best frame; thy tenderness and good frame cannot mediate for this: when you are oppressed and borne down with one trouble and incapacity or another, you need to come to him, that he would undertake for you. You need him not only when you are at a distance from God, and cannot find access, but when you are nearest to him, and admitted to his presence, to speak before his throne, then you need him for establishing you in that good condition: *Isa.* lxiv. 6. *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*

10. Is Christ the *covenant of the people?* and given you for this end? Then study to carry as becometh those who see their need of Christ the *covenant of the people;* and for this end take these directions. 1*st,* Take care to beat down self-confidence and self-adoration, even of every thing in you that is not Christ, his gifts, and grace, and assistance, not excepted. Put not a created grace in

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Christ's room; be not lifted up with these, nor led away from the *covenant of the people*, Phil. iii. 3. 4. *For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.* 2*dly*, When duties go well, and a good frame of spirit is enjoyed, watch that your hearts lay not the weight of your acceptation upon these things; but that you keep them, especially within sight of the mediation of Christ *the covenant of the people*, as the ground of your confidence, *Phil.* iii. 7. *For what things were gain to me, these I counted loss for Christ.* 3*dly*, Let your employing of Christ be as large as the extent of his covenant reaches unto, and that is *in all things pertaining to God*, Heb. ii. 17. Shut him not out of his office in any thing that is a matter between God and you. Think not to put him to drudge at your burdens, and to slight him in other things; he will not be so dealt with. 4*thly*, Let us beware of tempting Christ, or grieving *the covenant of the people.* If you carry about with you the fresh conviction of your need of him, you will be very tender and wary of tempting him, and of sinning against him: 1 *Cor.* x. 19. *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.*

11. If all who hear these glad tidings of great joy, who have broken covenant with God, and now are out of credit with him, would glorify him who is given to be *a covenant of the people*; then let us be much in the study of Christ in the execution of the great trust committed to him, and which he hath overtaken; which we may reduce to the following heads. 1*st*, He stands engaged to bring the elect into a capacity of covenanting with God. 2*dly*, To bring them within the bond of the covenant, after he hath thus prepared the way. 3*dly*, To enable them whom

he brings into the new covenant-state, to perform the duties required in the covenant. *4thly*, To keep them whom he brings within the bond of his covenant, that they fall not away from it; or, to enable them to continue in it. *5thly*, To bring them to the height of that blessedness which is appointed for them, and to crown the work in them.

1. The first part of Christ, *the covenant of the people*, his work, and executien of his trust, is, to bring the elect into a capacity of covenanting with him; to make the way of God accessible. For man by his sin was made incapable of covenanting with God, until Christ comes to compose the difference, and to restore that love and friendship which once was betwixt God and man: who, to prepare a way for man's covenanting with God, doth two things himself, and worketh two things in us; the first, to make God accessible; the other, to make man capable of covenanting with God, who is made accessible by Christ, *the covenant of the people*; his death. *1st*, He taketh on him man's nature, that a sacrifice might be among mankind who had sinned: he putteth his name in our obligatory, that the law might reach him: *Gal.* iv. 4. 5. *God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law*, &c. *2dly*, In our nature he obeyeth the law, and suffereth; he payeth a price for our ransom: 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *He is made sin for us, an offering for sin.* He stood in the sinner's stead here, he purchaseth a liberty for the elect, and hath it in his legal power to set them free when he will, *Acts* xx. 28. *He hath purchased his church with his own blood.* *3dly*, He convinceth men of their sin and bondage, and impossibility to satisfy justice; and for this end he attacheth them before divine justice: *John* xvi. 8. When the *Spirit* comes, he *reproves the world of sin, of righteousness*,

ness, and of judgment. Rom. vii. 9. *I was alive without,* &c. Gal. iii. 24. *He makes the law their schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith.* 4*thly*, He worketh their hearts to a yielding frame, making them ready to welcome the news of delivery, to be content to come out of their bondage, and to enjoy freedom by him; to be content to come in his will, and yield their weapons to him. He makes them to pant after a Saviour, as *Paul* did, *Rom.* v. 24. for compleat redemption; *O wretched man,* &c. And when all this is done, sinners are but in a capacity of covenanting with God; all this is done, to *made ready a people prepared for the Lord:* for though Christ hath paid the price of the elect's ransom, and hath purchased their liberty on the cross; yea, and hath also convinced them of the need of their ransom, and made them tractable to listen to accept of it; yet till a man come in by faith, and manifest his acceptance, or actually accept of Christ's proposals, he is not yet actually interested in him whom God hath *given for a covenant of the people.*

2. The second part of Christ's work is, to bring the elect within the bond of the covenant. And for bringing about of this, 1*st*, Christ makes an offer of a new covenant-state, with all suitable allurements and encouragements which may make the souls of the elect to accept of it; and for this end he hath appointed the *ministry of reconciliation,* 2 Cor. v. 19. 20. 2*dly*, He frameth the hearts of his people for accepting of his offer, and bringeth them into a satisfaction with the covenant, and the terms of it, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 5. It becomes *all their salvation, and all their desire.* 3*dly*, He actually maketh them to embrace it, and enter into it; and this he doth, by making us receive and embrace the promises, and to receive Christ

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in the promises, and by making us give up ourselves to be Christ's, and to be no more our own. He engageth the heart unto God by a covenant, *Jer.* xxx. 21. *And I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me; for who is this that engageth his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord.* It is he who maketh us give up ourselves unto him, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 27. 28. *And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my ways, and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.*

3. The third part of Christ's work in executing his covenant-trust, is, to enable them whom he bringeth into the covenant of grace, to perform the duty of the covenant, according to his undertaking to his Father on their behalf. And for this effect, 1*st*, He circumciseth their hearts, and taketh away their averseness to covenant-duties: *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26. *I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and,* &c. 2*dly*, He ingrafteth a new inward principle in their hearts, of compliance with, and propension unto, their duty: *Jer.* xxxi. 33. *I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Jer. xxxii. 40. *I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.* 3*dly*, He affordeth them strength for performing duties required in the covenant, and makes his grace effectual in them for that end, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 27. *I will put,* &c. He craveth his rent, but filleth the hand wherewith to pay it, *Phil.* i. 11. *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.* 2 Cor. ix. 8. *God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work.* 4*thly*, He breathes upon the graces of his people, and acteth them by daily fresh

fresh and quickening assistances, *Song* iv. 16. He maketh *the north and south wind to blow*, &c. Is. xxvi. 12. He *worketh all our works in us*, Phil. ii. 13. *He worketh in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

4. The fourth part of Christ's work in executing his covenant-trust, is, to keep those whom he bringeth into the covenant from falling away from that blessed estate. If it were not for Christ's travailing in this work, the reconciliation once made could not stand: if he did not continue the *covenant of the people* for ever, we should not for ever continue in the covenant-state: *Heb.* vii. 24. 25. *But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* And for keeping his people in covenant with God, besides his contriving the covenant so, that breaches shall not make it void; 1*st*, He gifteth them with, and conveyeth to them, an everlasting principle of grace that cannot die nor utterly perish, *John* iv. 14. *The water that I shall give him, shall be in him as a well of water springing up unto eternal life.* 2*dly*, He keeps life in them by his intercession, *Luke* xxii. 32. He *prays for them, that their faith fail not.* 3*dly*, He keeps a gripe of them; he engageth his Father to keep them, and employeth all his power, credit, and interest, to keep them in that blessed state: 1 *Pet.* i. 5. *They are kept by the power of God.* John x. 28. *He gives unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand.* 4*thly*, He maintains the peace and agreement he hath made, by his being their constant agent *to appear in the presence of God for them*, Heb. ix. 24. Rom. v. 2. *By whom also we have access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand,*

stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. 5*thly*, He promoteth intercourse and good correspondence betwixt the Father and his people, that their trading with heaven be not interrupted: *Eph.* ii. 18. *For by him we have an access through one Spirit unto the Father.* 1 Pet. iii. 18. *Christ hath once suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* So that now, as *Heb.* iv. 10. *we may come with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need.* 6*thly*, He maketh up emergent differences and breaches of the peace between God and us. And this he doth, (1.) As an agent, making his constant residence in heaven, that as *Heb.* ix. 24. upon all occasions *he may appear in the presence of God for us.* (2.) As an advocate, pleading his people's cause, and showing that satisfied justice must be for them, 1 *John* ii. 1. *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father.* (3.) As an intercessor, pleading and praying for them, *Heb.* vii. 28. *He ever liveth to make intercession for them.* (4) As a sollicitor, presenting and promoting their prayers to his and their God and Father.

5. The fifth part of Christ's work in executing his covenant-trust, is, to bring all these for whom he hath engaged in his covenant, to the light of that blessedness which he hath appointed for them; that *as the great captain of salvation, he may bring many sons to glory*, Heb. ii. 10. Which glory standeth in perfect and glorious conformity with Christ, and in perfect and glorious communion with God, *when they will be like him, and see him as he is*, 1 John iii. 2. For accomplishing whereof, 1*st*, He prepareth that happiness for them, and a fit place where they may enjoy it for ever: *John* xiv. 2. *In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you:*

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I go to prepare a place for you. 2*dly*, He keepeth this happiness for them, when they can contribute nothing for keeping of it, 1 *Pet.* i. 4. *It is reserved in heaven for them.* 3*dly*, He keepeth them for it. They have as much need of keeping, as their crown and inheritance: as we cannot keep these, so we cannot keep ourselves. 4*thly*, He goeth before his people, and breaketh the opposition that is in their way to glory; so that he leaveth them no adversary to fight with, but such as he hath ruined and conquered, *Micah* ii. 13. *The breaker is gone up before them.* 5*thly*, He maketh his people meet and fit for the glorious condition, *Col.* i. 12. *Meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.* Eph. v. 26. 27. *He gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.* 6*thly*, When all his people are fitted, and ready to receive what he hath prepared for them, he will come again for them himself, and carry them triumphantly to glory: *John* xiv. 3. *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.* Col. iii. 4. *When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye appear also with him in glory.* Rev. xix. 7. 8. *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*——*And to her it was granted, to be clothed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

12. That we may habitually remember Christ's dying and redeeming love, and draw forth the sweets of it to his glory and our spiritual benefit, that we may be filled with holy admiration and wonder at Christ, who is the covenant for us; let us think of him, as he through whom the whole covenant of peace from beginning to

end, was transacted, through whom God dealt and doth deal with us, and we with him. As,

1. Through him was the covenant with us first motioned, and by him was the motion entertained on our behalf. There had never been a covenant between God and fallen man, had not Christ stept in to overture the reconciliation of justice and mercy.

2. Through him was the business done, and ended in the council of God. He agented the covenant till it was a closed bargain, in, and an eternal plot between, the Father and himself: *Psal.* lxxxix. 3. *I have made a covenant with my chosen.*

3. Through him were we represented in his transaction with the Father. He interposed and did the business by way of representation, as the head of the church: 2 *Tim.* i. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*

4. Through him did God strike hands with us. The stipulation on our part was made by him, whom the Father took as a responsal person to bargain with. He put his name in our bond, and stept in as surety for the broken man, *Heb.* vii. 22. *He became the surety of the better testament.*

5. Through him is the whole covenant fulfilled. He fulfilleth all that is promised on God's part, 2 *Cor.* i. 20. *For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us.* And he worketh in us and for us whatsoever is required of us, *Heb.* xii. 2. *He is the author and finisher of faith.*

6. Through him are the news of the covenant of peace between God and us published and proclaimed:

claimed: *Isa.* lxi. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek.* Eph. ii. 17. *And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.* Psal. xl. 9. He hath *come and preached righteousness in the great congregation.*

7. Through him is the mystery of his covenant made manifest in the hearts of his people: he shines upon the mystery of his covenant, and makes it to be understood. The discovery of God reconciling the world to himself, and taking the covenant-breakers into covenant with himself, could never have been made, had not Christ been given *for a covenant of the people*: John i. 18. *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

8. By him was a price told down to justice on our behalf: he entered his person in prison for us, till he paid the debt with the price of his blood, after which he was set at liberty: *Heb.* ix. 12. 15. *By his own blood he entered once into the holy place, having obtained redemption for us——For this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, they who are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*

9. Through him is the difference actually composed, and the peace made up; the disagreeing parties are brought together through him: *Eph.* ii. 13. 14. *But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Now God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself,* 2 Cor. v. 19.

10. Through him are all the blessings of the covenant applied to us, and the fruit of his purchase is drawn forth, as a priest for ever. He is the person who still mediates and officiates before God on our behalf, for the fresh applications of all his purchase, *Heb.* vii. 25. *He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

11. Through him we receive all the blessings of the covenant. He is the head of the church, who receiveth blessings for the whole body, and every member thereof, *Psal.* lxviii. 18. *He hath received gifts for men.* He is the person who receiveth all the blessings of the covenant at first hand; the person on whom all the acts of God's love are first put forth, *John* i. 14. 16. *The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us——And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.*

12. Through him was the covenant with us confirmed; he sealed the new testament with his own blood, and interposed by his death to make the covenant God's irrevocable will of grace unto us-ward, *Heb.* vi. 17. 18. *Wherein God willing more abundantly to manifest unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things wherein it was impossible for God to lie, they might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.* Christ the *covenant of the people* is the person in whom, and by whom, the covenant was confirmed.

13. Through

13. Through him is the covenant a closed bargain, as to the addition of our consent to it: through him are our hearts engaged to the bargain. He travaileth with us to obtain our consent to it, *Ezek.* xx. 37. *He brings them within the bond of the covenant.*

14. Through him is the covenant held fast with all those who are once really engaged in it, that it crumble not away as the first covenant did, but may stand firm and stable: *Psal.* lxxxix. 34. 35. *My covenant will I not break, nor alter the word that is gone out of my mouth.*——*Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David.* John xvii. 12. *Those that thou gavest me I kept, and none of them is lost.*

From all these views of Christ the *covenant of the people*, we may see,

1. Their misery who are under the covenant of works, which is the state of all natural men. You must either do for yourselves, or think of changing your covenant-state: while you remain under the old covenant seeking righteousness by the law, you can have no benefit by Christ, who is given *for a covenant of the people.*

2. Learn how blessed the state of believers is who are within the bond of the covenant of grace. You may with boldness approach Christ with your services; and for obtaining blessings and directions from him, you have Christ the Mediator of the new covenant. If Christ be at any time angry, you have one to put between you and his anger; to speak for you, when you dare not speak for yourselves; to procure blessings for you, when you deserve none.

3. Is Christ *given for a covenant of the people?* Are there so many encouraging views to be taken of him in relation to the new covenant? Then make sure of an interest in him; let him be employed, acknowledged, and honoured by you as the *covenant of the people. Let all men honour the Son, even as they do the Father,* John v. 23.

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